

Lautenbach (L. J.)

THE VALUE OF NITROGLYCERINE IN TINNITUS AURIUM.

VALEUR DE LA NITRO-GLYCÉRINE DANS LE BOUR-
DONNEMENT DES OREILLES.

DER WERTH DES NITROGLYCERINS BEI OHRENSAUSEN.

READ IN THE SECTION OF OTOTOLOGY, INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL
CONGRESS, NINTH SESSION.

By LOUIS J. LAUTENBACH, A. M., M. D., PH. D.,
PHILADELPHIA,

SURGEON TO THE PENNSYLVANIA EYE AND EAR INFIRMARY;
CHIEF OF THE EYE CLINIC OF THE GERMAN HOSPITAL, ETC.

After the usual experience in ear-work, and a gradual accumulation of unimproving cases of tinnitus aurium, I began to study the general effects of nitro-glycerine, and to use it in these cases. It had been used by others in tinnitus, both with and without success, but I knew of no way of recognizing the cases in which it would be most likely to prove serviceable. In order to learn when to use it, I began to give it, in private practice, to all cases of tinnitus in which I had found no improvement under other treatment, and, in public practice, in all cases of tinnitus. In some cases there was improvement, in others there was none.



In the patients where improvement had occurred there was found to be present a similarity of conditions, and I soon satisfied myself that there was a class of patients in which the nitroglycerine treatment was valuable. I found it most serviceable in patients having tinnitus aurium, without much impairment of hearing, and where but little change had occurred in the naso-pharynx, and where it was found, on examination, that some abnormal condition of the heart existed, either functional or organic.

In many of these cases more or less structural changes, from catarrhal inflammation of the middle ear, were present, among them changes in the shape and translucency of the drumhead, with accompanying change in appearance or position of the triangular light spot. Follicular pharyngitis was present in some of the cases. The tinnitus was generally constant, or nearly so. It was not, as a rule, more marked when the patient was in a recumbent position; occasionally there was some remission in that position. The thermometric and barometric conditions of the atmosphere influenced the tinnitus. Damp weather, with low barometer, usually increased it.

Dull, heavy headache, more or less persistent, and most frequently located in the parietal regions, though sometimes located in the frontal region, was of frequent occurrence.

In these cases I used the nitroglycerine in pill form, and in doses of one hundredth of a grain. At first but one pill a day was given, generally in the morning. The amount given later was increased, enough of the pills being given to diminish the tinnitus, or to cause

headache. As many as six of these pills were given in a day, though usually two were found to produce a beneficial effect. Improvement sometimes was manifest within a day or two after beginning the use of the remedy. In cases of long standing the remedy was sometimes continued for a period varying from one to three months before a satisfactory result was obtained. Cases, in which there was recurrence of the tinnitus, seemed to yield more readily on resuming the treatment than when the remedy was first administered. The conclusion which I reached, after a fair trial of this remedy, was, that it is of value in certain cases of tinnitus aurium, especially in those where cardiac lesion exists, functional or organic, and where there is little or no loss of hearing.

1723 WALNUT STREET, PHILA.

